

CLAIMS:

We claim:

- 1 1. A method comprising:
2 discovering a new unit deployed within a data center;
3 finding a configuration template for the discovered unit; and
4 automatically installing software on said discovered unit based upon said
5 configuration template.

- 1 2. A method according to claim 1 wherein discovering includes:
2 determining whether said unit requires soft configuration; and
3 if said unit requires soft configuration, then receiving a network request for
4 configuration data from said unit.

- 1 3. A method according to claim 2 wherein said discovering further includes:
2 determining if the MAC (Media Access Control) address sent with said network
3 request is of a known MAC.

- 1 4. A method according to claim 3 wherein determining includes:
2 extracting the MAC of the network device which originated said network request;
3 comparing the determined MAC with a list of known MACs, said MAC being
4 known if said determined MAC is also found in said list.

- 1 5. A method according to claim 3 wherein if said MAC is known, then
2 discovering further includes:
3 finding an asset ID in an asset records database, said asset ID based upon said
4 MAC.

- 1 6. A method according to claim 5 further comprising:
2 determining the state of said unit;
3 if said state is one of initial and re-install, then proceeding with said finding of a
4 configuration template; and

5 if said state is not one of initial and re-install then proceeding with the normal
6 boot sequence of said unit.

1 7. A method according to claim 3 further comprising:
2 if said determined MAC is not known, then proceeding with intruder diagnostics.

1 8. A method according to claim 1 further comprising:
2 prior to a new unit being deployed, associating the unit with an asset record.

1 9. A method according to claim 8 wherein associating includes:
2 creating said asset record with a specific asset ID, said asset ID tied to a fixed
3 parameter of said unit;
4 waiting for said unit to be received and prepared for assembly;
5 correlating said received unit with said created asset record.

1 10. A method according to claim 9 wherein said correlating includes:
2 reading bar-code information on components of said unit;
3 determining which one of a plurality of asset records contains parameters that
4 match said bar-code information; and
5 associating said unit with said determined asset record, said determined asset
6 record being the same as said created asset record for said unit.

1 11. A method according to claim 1 wherein said unit is mountable within a
2 rack of said data center.

1 12. A method according to claim 9 wherein said fixed parameter is the MAC
2 address of the primary Network Interface Card (NIC) of said unit.

1 13. A system comprising:
2 a data center deployable unit (node) connectable to a network;
3 a management system server configured to manage a database of asset records,
4 one of said asset records corresponding to said node, said management system server

5 maintaining and updating state information about said node in its corresponding asset
6 record, said management system server connected to said network; and
7 a software configuration system server configured to automatically install
8 software on said node once said node is deployed and connected to said network, said
9 software configuration system server connected to said network.

1 14. A system according to claim 13 wherein said software configuration
2 system is instructed on the manner and content of said installation by a software
3 configuration template.

1 15. A system according to claim 13 further wherein said management system
2 server is configured to:
3 determine whether said node requires soft configuration; and
4 if said node requires soft configuration, then receiving a network request from
5 said node.

1 16. A system according to claim 15 wherein said management system server
2 determines if the MAC of the network device which initiated said request is a known
3 MAC, said network device a part of said node.

1 17. A system according to claim 13 wherein said node is a computer system
2 mountable within a rack in said data center.

1 18. A system according to claim 16 wherein said network device is a Network
2 Interface Card (NIC).

1 19. A system according to claim 14 wherein said management system server
2 finds the asset ID corresponding to said node upon said node sending a network request
3 message.

1 20. A system according to claim 19 wherein said management system server is
2 further configured to:
3 determine the state of said unit;
4 if said state is one of initial and re-install, then proceed with said finding of said
5 configuration template; and
6 if said state is not one of initial and re-install then allow said node to proceed with
7 the normal boot sequence of said unit.

1 21. A system according to claim 13 wherein said management system server is
2 configured to associate said node with its said corresponding asset record.

1 22. A system according to claim 21 wherein said management system sever is
2 further configured to:
3 create said asset record with a specific asset ID, said asset ID tied to a fixed
4 parameter of said unit;
5 wait for said unit to be received and prepared for assembly; and
6 correlate said received unit with said created asset record.

1 23. An article comprising a computer readable medium having instructions
2 stored thereon which when executed cause:
3 discovering a new unit deployed within a data center;
4 finding a configuration template for the discovered unit; and
5 automatically installing software on said discovered unit based upon said
6 configuration template.

1 24. An article according to claim 23 wherein discovering includes:
2 determining whether said unit requires soft configuration; and
3 if said unit requires soft configuration, then receiving a network request from said
4 unit.

1 25. An article according to claim 24 wherein said discovering further includes:
2 determining if the MAC (Media Access Control) address sent with said network
3 request is a known MAC.

1 26. An article according to claim 25 wherein if said MAC is known, then
2 discovering further includes:
3 finding an asset ID in an asset records database, said asset ID based upon said
4 MAC.

1 27. An article according to claim 26 that further causes:
2 determining the state of said unit;
3 if said state is one of initial and re-install, then proceeding with said finding of a
4 configuration template; and
5 if said state is not one of initial and re-install then proceeding with the normal
6 boot sequence of said unit.

1 28. An article according to claim 23 that further causes:
2 prior to a new unit being deployed, associating the unit with an asset record.

1 29. An article according to claim 28 wherein associating includes:
2 creating said asset record with a specific asset ID, said asset ID tied to a fixed
3 parameter of said unit;
4 waiting for said unit to be received and prepared for assembly;
5 correlating said received unit with said created asset record.